

### Amendments to the Claims

Kindly amend claims 1, 3, 14, 15, 26, 28, 29, 30, 40, 41, 49, 51, 60, 61 & 69 as set forth below. All pending claims are reproduced below, with changes in the amended claims shown by underlining (for added matter) and strikethrough/double brackets (for deleted matter).

1. (Currently Amended) A method for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said method comprising:

providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer system systems, said plurality of unique inquiries being organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of said at least one subject group having multiple unique records of inquiry; and

processing said at least one ~~inquiry of said plurality of inquiries~~ subject group of said dictionary file data structure to accumulate said state information, said processing comprising for each group of said at least one group having multiple unique records of inquiry:

processing a record of said multiple unique records of inquiry, and if a condition of said record is satisfied then terminating processing of said group, otherwise processing a next record of said multiple unique records of inquiry and continuing until a condition of one record of said multiple records of inquiry is satisfied or all records of said multiple records of inquiry of said group have been processed.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one subject group comprises multiple subject groups, and wherein said processing of each group of said at least one group having multiple records of inquiry comprises proceeding to a next group of said multiple subject groups when said condition of one record of said multiple records of inquiry in said at least one group is satisfied.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein ~~at least some~~ multiple inquiries of said plurality of inquiries comprise instructions, each instruction providing a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of said computer system.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said processing comprises processing each group of said at least one subject group, and wherein said method further comprises transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database in an ASCII file.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one record of inquiry of said multiple records of inquiry comprises an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, said result comprising state information for said group having said record when the condition of said instruction is satisfied.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system within a network of computer systems, and wherein said providing comprises reading said dictionary file from a server coupled to said network of computer systems to said one computer system to gather said state information thereon.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, further comprising forwarding results representative of gathered state information to an information repository coupled to said network of computer systems, said information repository residing at said server system providing said dictionary file.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said processing comprises processing each group of said at least one subject group, and setting group substitution variables for output upon initiation of processing of each group of said at least one subject group.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said multiple records of inquiry of said at least one group comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry for said group.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least ~~some~~ two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

15. (Currently Amended) A method for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said method comprising:

providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining said state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer ~~system~~ systems, at least one inquiry of said plurality of unique inquiries within the dictionary file data structure comprising an instruction having a result which is automatically output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, each result being predefined in said dictionary file data structure, and wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry; and

processing at least one inquiry of said plurality of inquiries of said dictionary file to accumulate said state information, said processing comprising for each instruction processed, outputting said result of said instruction from said dictionary file data structure when said condition of said instruction is satisfied, wherein said state information on said at least one computer system comprises outputted results from said dictionary file data structure from satisfaction of said at least one instruction.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said at least one inquiry comprising said instruction comprises multiple inquiries of said plurality of inquiries, each instruction having a result which is output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of the computer system.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

19. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

21. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database defined in an ASCII file.

22. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system within a network of computer systems, and wherein said providing comprises reading said dictionary file from a server coupled to said network to said one computer system to gather said state information thereon.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein said reading of said dictionary file is performed by an inquiry tool routine located on said one computer system.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising forwarding results representative of gathered state information to an information repository of said network of computer systems, said information repository residing at said server providing said dictionary file.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least ~~some~~ two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value, or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

27. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein said plurality of inquiries are organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of the at least one subject group having multiple instructions, and processing each instruction of each group of the at least one group having multiple instructions such that if a condition of the instruction is satisfied then terminating processing of the group, otherwise processing a next instruction of the multiple instructions within the group and continuing until a condition of one instruction of the multiple instructions is satisfied or until all instructions of the multiple instructions of the group have been processed.

28. (Currently Amended) A memory for centrally storing a dictionary file data structure, the dictionary file data structure facilitating gathering of information on a state of a network of computer ~~system~~ systems, the dictionary file data structure comprising:

a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining state information on [[the]] at least one computer system of said network of computer systems, said plurality of unique inquiries being organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of the at least one subject group having multiple unique records of inquiry; and

wherein the multiple unique records of inquiry of the at least one group comprise multiple instructions, each instruction comprising a result to be automatically output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, each result being predefined in said dictionary file data structure, and wherein outputting of a result from one instruction terminates processing of said at least one group having multiple records of inquiry.

29. (Currently Amended) A memory for centrally storing a dictionary file data structure, the dictionary file data structure facilitating gathering information on a state of a network of computer ~~system~~ systems, the dictionary file data structure comprising:

a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining said state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer ~~system~~ systems, at least one inquiry of the plurality of unique inquiries comprising an instruction having a result which is automatically output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, each result being predefined in said dictionary file data structure, and wherein said plurality of unique inquiries comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry.

30. (Currently Ameded) A system for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said system comprising:

means for providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer system systems, said plurality of unique inquiries being organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of said at least one subject group having multiple unique records of inquiry; and

means for processing at least one inquiry of said plurality of inquiries of said dictionary file to accumulate said state information, said means for processing comprises for each group of said at least one group having multiple unique records of inquiry[[:]]:

means for processing a record of said multiple unique records of inquiry, and if a condition of said record is satisfied then for terminating processing of said group, otherwise for processing a next record of said multiple records of inquiry and continuing until a condition of one record of said multiple unique records of inquiry is satisfied or all records of said multiple records of inquiry of said group have been processed.

31. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein said at least one subject group comprises multiple subject groups, and wherein said means for processing of each group of said at least one group having multiple records of inquiry comprises means for proceeding to a next group of said multiple subject groups when said condition of one record of said multiple records of inquiry in said at least one group is satisfied.

32. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein at least some inquiries of said plurality of inquiries comprise instructions, each instruction providing a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.



33. (Original) The system of claim 32, further comprising means for collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of said computer system.

34. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

35. (Original) The system of claim 33, wherein said means for processing comprises means for processing each group of said at least one subject group, and wherein said system further comprises means for transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

36. (Original) The system of claim 35, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

37. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database in an ASCII file.

38. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein said means for processing comprises means for processing each group of said at least one subject group, and means for setting group substitution variables for output upon initiation of processing of each group of said at least one subject group.

39. (Original) The system of claim 30, wherein said multiple records of inquiry of said at least one group comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry for said group.

40. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least ~~some~~ two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

41. (Currently Amended) A system for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said system comprising:

means for providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining said state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer system systems, at least one inquiry of said plurality of unique inquiries within the dictionary file data structure comprising an instruction having a result which is automatically output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, each result being predefined in said dictionary file data structure, and wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry; and

means for processing said at least one inquiry of said plurality of inquiries of said dictionary file to accumulate said state information, said means for processing comprising for each instruction processed, means for outputting said result of said instruction from said dictionary file data structure when said condition of said instruction is satisfied, wherein said state information on said at least one computer system comprises any outputted results from said dictionary file data structure from satisfaction of said at least one instruction.

42. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein said at least one inquiry comprising said instruction comprises multiple inquiries of said plurality of inquiries, each instruction having a result which is output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

43. (Original) The system of claim 42, further comprising means for collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of the computer system.

44. (Original) The system of claim 43, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

45. (Original) The system of claim 43, further comprising means for transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

46. (Original) The system of claim 45, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

47. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database defined in an ASCII file.

48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 41, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least some two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value, or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

50. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein said plurality of inquiries are organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of the at least one subject group having multiple instructions, and said system comprising means for processing each instruction of each group of the at least one group having multiple instructions such that if a condition of the instruction is satisfied processing of the group is terminated, otherwise a next instruction of the multiple instructions within the group is processed and continuing until a condition of one instruction of the multiple instructions is satisfied or until all instructions of the multiple instructions of the group have been processed.

51. (Currently Amended) At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said method comprising:

providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer system systems, said plurality of unique inquiries being organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of said at least one subject group having multiple unique records of inquiry; and

processing at least one inquiry of said plurality of inquiries of said dictionary file to accumulate said state information, said processing comprising for each group of said at least one group having multiple unique records of inquiry:

processing a record of said multiple unique records of inquiry, and if a condition of said record is satisfied then terminating processing of said group, otherwise processing a next record of said multiple unique records of inquiry and continuing until a condition of one record of said multiple records of inquiry is satisfied or all records of said multiple records of inquiry of said group have been processed.

52. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 51, wherein said at least one subject group comprises multiple subject groups, and wherein said processing of each group of said at least one group having multiple records of inquiry comprises proceeding to a next group of said multiple subject groups when said condition of one record of said multiple records of inquiry in said at least one group is satisfied.

53. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 51, wherein at least some inquiries of said plurality of inquiries comprise instructions, each instruction providing a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

54. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 53, further comprising collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of said computer system.

55. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 54, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

56. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 54, wherein said processing comprises processing each group of said at least one subject group, and wherein said method further comprises transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

57. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 56, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

58. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 51, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database in an ASCII file.

59. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 51, wherein said multiple records of inquiry of said at least one group comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry for said group.

60. (Currently Amended) The at least one program storage device of claim 51, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least ~~some~~ two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

61. (Currently Amended) At least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for gathering information on a state of a network of computer system systems, said method comprising:

providing at a central location a dictionary file data structure having a plurality of unique inquiries for ascertaining said state information on at least one computer system of said network of computer system systems, at least one inquiry of said plurality of unique inquiries within the dictionary file data structure comprising an instruction having a result which is automatically output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied, each result being predefined in said dictionary file data structure, and wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise at least one of a file check inquiry, a file content check inquiry, an external process check inquiry, or a default inquiry; and

processing at least one inquiry of said plurality of inquiries of said dictionary file to accumulate said state information, said processing comprising for each instruction processed, outputting said result of said instruction from said dictionary file data structure when said condition of said instruction is satisfied, wherein said state information on said at least one computer system comprises outputted results from said dictionary file data structure from satisfaction of said at least one instruction.

62. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 61, wherein said at least one inquiry comprising said instruction comprises multiple inquiries of said plurality of inquiries, each instruction having a result which is output when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

63. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 62, further comprising collecting results of said instructions into a file, said file being representative of said state of the computer system.

64. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 63, wherein each inquiry of said plurality of inquiries is an instruction which provides a result when a condition of said instruction is satisfied.

65. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 63, further comprising transferring said file to an information repository coupled to said computer system across a network.

66. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 65, wherein said computer system comprises one computer system of a plurality of computer systems coupled to said network.

67. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 61, wherein said dictionary file comprises a rules database defined in an ASCII file.

68. (Cancelled)



69. (Currently Amended) The at least one program storage device of claim 61, wherein said plurality of inquiries comprise multiple inquiry types, and wherein said multiple inquiry types comprise at least ~~some~~ two of:

a file inquiry which checks for existence of a file of a certain date, time or size and which can return file information;

an INI file inquiry which checks for a certain application, variable and value, and which can return a certain value, or one or more variables and values;

an ASCII file inquiry which checks for a certain character string in a file, and which can return information on a line within the character string;

a registry inquiry which checks for a certain registry tree or value, and which can return one or more values in a tree or sub-tree;

an external process inquiry using an INI output, which comprises executing an external process and performing an INI file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry which executes an external process, provides an ASCII output, and performs an ASCII file inquiry on the result;

an external process inquiry using a registry, which executes an external process and performs a registry inquiry on the result; and

multiple inquiries which comprise a combination of multiple other inquiry types, where all must succeed.

70. (Original) The at least one program storage device of claim 61, wherein said plurality of inquiries are organized into at least one subject group, each subject group being directed to a different piece of said state information, at least one group of the at least one subject group having multiple instructions, and processing each instruction of each group of the at least one group having multiple instructions such that if a condition of the instruction is satisfied then terminating processing of the group, otherwise processing a next instruction of the multiple instructions within the group and continuing until a condition of one instruction of the multiple instructions is satisfied or until all instructions of the multiple instructions of the group have been processed.

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